



National Minority AIDS Council

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protect yourself

from hepatitis



Spread the word

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that men who have sex with men be vaccinated against hepatitis A and hepatitis B.

Hepatitis Facts

There are five types of viral hepatitis that have been identified. Hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C are the types that are commonly seen in the United States.

Hepatitis A

- Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by infection with the hepatitis A virus (HAV). HAV is spread primarily by swallowing contaminated fecal matter (poop).

Examples of how HAV infection is spread:

- o Close, personal contact with an infected person (e.g., anal rimming).
- o Consuming food or water that has been contaminated by an infected person.
- There is no chronic long-term infection.
- Once persons recover from hepatitis A, they cannot get it again.
- There is a vaccine available to prevent HAV infection.



Hepatitis B

- Hepatitis B is a liver disease caused by infection with the hepatitis B virus (HBV).
- HBV is most often spread by having sex with an infected person.
- Some people who get HBV stay infected for life and can spread HBV to others.
- There is a vaccine available to prevent infection with HBV.

Hepatitis C

- Hepatitis C is a liver disease caused by infection with the hepatitis C virus (HCV).
- HCV is spread most often through injection drug use. It can also be spread by sex, but this does not happen very often.
- Most people who get infected carry the virus for the rest of their lives. Most of these people have some liver damage, but many do not feel sick.
- Some persons may develop cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver and liver failure, which may take years to develop.
- There is NO vaccine to prevent infection with HCV.



Who should be vaccinated against Hepatitis A?

- Men who have sex with men
- Injection and non-injection drug users
- Persons traveling to countries where hepatitis A is common
- Persons with chronic liver disease

Who should be vaccinated against Hepatitis B?

- Men who have sex with men
- Sex contacts of infected persons
- Injection drug users
- Persons on chronic (long-term) kidney dialysis
- Household contacts of persons with chronic hepatitis B

***For additional risk groups that should be vaccinated against hepatitis A and B, go to www.cdc.gov/hepatitis.**

Who should be tested for Hepatitis C?

- Persons who ever injected illegal drugs
- Persons who were ever on chronic (long-term) kidney dialysis
- Recipients of blood transfusions or organ transplants before July 1992
- Recipients of blood products produced before 1987
- Persons who have signs and symptoms of liver disease

***For additional risk groups that should be tested for hepatitis C, go to www.cdc.gov/hepatitis.**



What if you don't feel sick?

Many people who are infected with hepatitis viruses will have no symptoms.

If symptoms do occur, they are similar for all types of hepatitis.

These symptoms can include:

- Yellowing of skin & eyes (jaundice)
- Fatigue
- Abdominal pain & bloating
- Nausea, loss of appetite
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Fever

Don't gamble away your future.

What you do now could save your life.

- Get vaccinated against hepatitis A and hepatitis B.
- Limit the number of your sex partners.
- Use condoms and dental dams (latex barriers for oral sex) correctly every time you have sex.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially after fingering, rimming, or penetrating your partner.
- The most reliable way to avoid transmission of STDs is to abstain from sexual intercourse or to be in a long term, mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner.
- If a person chooses to have sexual intercourse with a partner whose infection status is unknown or who has an STD, a new condom should be used.
- Don't share items that may have blood on them such as needles, tooth brushes, or razors.

If you have hepatitis you should not drink alcohol. The risk of serious liver damage increases significantly if you continue to drink alcohol.



For more information about hepatitis:

- Ask your doctor _____
- Contact your local
Health Department _____
- Call the National STD Hotline at 1.800.227.8922
- Visit www.cdc.gov/hepatitis or call 1-888-4-HEP-CDC

